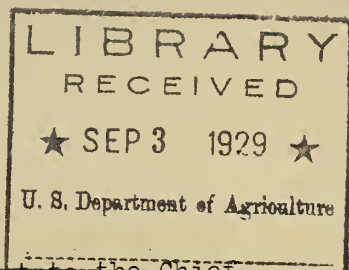


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THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR.

A radio talk by Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, Assistant to the Chief of Bureau of Home Economics, through WRC and 31 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company at 1:35 p. m., E. S. T., Thursday, August 15, 1929.

HOW DO YOU DO HOMEMAKERS!

I wonder how many of you have the habit of short-order picnics in hot weather, -- that is, picking up a lunch and picking up the family for an out-of-door meal with plenty of crisp, cool, things to eat, enjoyed in a shady, breezy spot? Such an outing leaves the family with better dispositions and better digestive systems for the next day's ordeal, whatever it may be.

Luckily for the homemaker, picnics aren't what they used to be; they are better. We no longer do so much hard work ahead of time frying chickens, making great crocks of potato salad and jars of pickled beets, baking pies and cakes, and preparing dozens of sandwiches. Such traditional delicacies of the old-fashioned picnic basket were delicious, but they took much of the joy of the outing away from those who had to spend the energy fixing them. And more than that, they often left the crowd sluggish from over-eating so much heavy food. We used to pack too much protein and starch in the lunch basket: in addition to chicken there would be deviled eggs, perhaps ham or other meat sandwiches, and maybe even cheese; and worse still, instead of offsetting this heavy food with lots of fresh fruit and crisp salad materials, it was accompanied by a rather filling salad and followed by rich cake or pie. Picnics should be just as well balanced, if not more so, than meals eaten at home, because so often they are planned as an escape from the heat of the city, and the family is decidedly in need of light, refreshing food.

There are more picnic baskets these days with a jar of salad dressing, some whole tomatoes, cucumbers and a head of lettuce carefully washed and crisped, a small cream cheese or a jar of cottage cheese, perhaps some potato chips, hard cooked eggs or deviled eggs, ice cold watermelon, or a box of berries, in season, or some peaches and cream and cookies. Rolls or a loaf of bread, butter, and a thermos jug with a cooling drink completes the "makings" of a well-balanced lunch basket. A picnic of this kind can really be picked up on short notice and with little effort, and the small amount of preparation necessary can be done at the picnic spot. Someone butters the bread or rolls, while someone else slices the tomatoes and cucumbers, and before long a tempting picnic plate with deviled eggs and cheese, a huge crisp and colorful salad, bread and butter sandwiches, and potato chips, is ready. Iced tea or iced coffee, fruit juice or milk, with the cookies and the fruit completes the picnic meal.

Of course ^{if} there is cold roast on hand, or if the picnic is planned far enough ahead of time to allow for the baking of a meat loaf, the frying of chicken, or the preparation of a fish or meat salad, the lunch may be built around one of these. And there may be half of a cake left from yesterday's dessert to take along instead of cookies. But the general scheme is much the same. There must always be crisp and refreshing things to balance the meal and to revive the hot picnickers.

Groups that have no pantry to draw from can very easily gather up at the market the makings of an out-door meal that requires very little equipment for its preparation. One of the most delightful outings I have had this season was gotten up on very short notice. Tomatoes, lettuce, salad dressing, bread, butter, salt, pepper, sliced bacon, coffee, sugar, cream, blackberries and cookies, and pasteboard plates and cups were bought in a few minutes. The crowd of ten drove to a beautiful woodsy spot near a little stream that was fed by a clear spring. Someone set to work at once to gather up a few sticks of wood for a small fire, placed just far enough away from the slope on which we were spreading out our food. Someone washed the lettuce, tomatoes and berries in the spring water that we knew was perfectly safe and sanitary. Someone else sliced bread, buttered it and spread it with the heavy salad dressing. By this time a tin bucket of water was heating for the coffee, and two of the picnickers were cooking strips of bacon on long, green sticks. It seemed no time at all until we were filling up on bacon tomato and lettuce sandwiches, coffee, berries and cream, and cookies. Our variety was not great, but our quantity was abundant, enough for second helpings of everything. And by the way, we remembered to burn up our trash and then to put out the remains of the fire absolutely so there was no chance for a forest blaze to start from it later.

There are so many things that are easy to take on picnics, that require no preparation ahead of time and very little fixing or equipment when eaten. I wonder if during the fresh pineapple season you have ever taken a large ripe juicy pineapple in the picnic basket? It is washed off, cut open lengthwise in sections, and then in shorter pieces, and is eaten right out of the outside. A few people like to dip the meaty side of the section in sugar before digging in with the teeth. It is really delicious, and is a great thirst quencher on a picnic.

I am sure that all of you have your own choice ideas for picnic baskets. Whatever they are, gather them together these hot days with the least effort on your own part, and surprise the family by starting forth on short notice frequently for an out of doors meal, prepared mostly at the picnic spot. Use your own back yard if it is cool and shaded, and when the meal is over gather up the paper plates and napkins, and perhaps even pasteboard drinking cups, having nothing much to wash but a few forks and spoons.

With this thought, I bid you goodbye until next Thursday, Homemakers.